

Red Light Camera Collections – Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is a red light violation?

A violation has occurred if, when facing a steady red traffic signal, your vehicle proceeded into such an intersection without stopping and standing until an indication to proceed was shown, or your vehicle made a right hand turn, or a left hand turn from a one-way street onto another one-way street, while facing a steady red signal without first coming to a complete stop and not proceeding until it was safe to do so and yielding right-of-way to pedestrians lawfully in an adjacent crosswalk and to other traffic lawfully using the intersection.

2. When and where did I fail to stop at a red light?

The location, date and time of offense, the Notice# and amount due is noted on the collection letter. You may go to www.ViolationInfo.com and log in to view the specifics of the violation. To log in, you will need your Notice # and Pin #, which are included on the top and bottom portions of your letter.

3. Didn't the Red Light Enforcement Camera Program come to an end?

Yes, but penalties for violations that occurred before repeal must be paid.

Ordinance No. 2011-748 passed and approved and ordained by the City Council of the City of Houston, Texas, August 24, 2011 states that the provisions of Article XIX of Chapter 45, Photographic Traffic Signal Enforcement Systems are saved from repeal for the limited purpose of their continuing application to any violation of said Article XIX that occurred before November 15, 2010, and during the period July 24 – August 24, 2011. For this purpose, a violation of Article XIX is deemed to have been committed if any element of the violation occurred during the periods defined in this Section. By law, the violation(s) that occurred during these periods are enforceable and must be paid.

4. Why did I receive a Credit Bureau Reporting Action letter (collection letter)?

As explained in the collection letter, you have failed to pay penalties imposed on you for failure to stop at a red light, which is a violation of State of Texas Statutes and the City of Houston Code of Ordinances.

5. What if I was not the driver/owner of the vehicle at the time of the violation?

Based upon a City of Houston Police Officer's review of images and video captured by the automated camera system and the State's official motor vehicle registration records, it was determined that your vehicle was used to commit the red light violation(s) described in the collection letter. Texas law places legal responsibility for the violation on the vehicle's owner as shown in the State's official motor vehicle registration records at the time the violation occurred. In certain cases a person could have contested this, but all such rights of appeal, if any, expired long ago. Because you failed to timely contest liability or pay the penalties, under Texas Transportation Code Chapter 707, you have admitted liability and waived any right to appeal.

6. Will my insurance rates be affected?

This is a civil penalty that may not be recorded on the owner's driving record. However, the Texas Insurance Code Chapter 559 allows insurance companies to use your credit score and credit information to determine your insurance rates for automobile, residential property, boat and other personal lines of insurance for you and any other members of your household. As explained in the collection letter you received, the City intends to disclose to one or more national credit bureaus that you are delinquent in payment of the penalties.

You may wish to contact your insurance company for more information.

7. Is the violation reported to anyone?

If the owner of a motor vehicle registered in Texas is delinquent in the payment of a civil penalty imposed under Chapter 707 of the Texas Transportation Code, the county assessor-collector or the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles may refuse to register a motor vehicle alleged to have been involved in the violation. The City of Houston has submitted a request to the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles to place a State hold on the registration renewal of the vehicle identified. Driving with an expired registration is an offense under the Texas Transportation Code 502.404(b) and the operator of the vehicle is subject to a traffic citation.

In addition, the City intends to report your failure to pay the penalties to one or more national Credit Bureau Reporting agencies.

8. Where do I pay?

You have several options:

- Mail - write your Notice # on a check or money order made payable to the City of Houston, Accounts Receivable, PO Box 87, Houston, TX 77001-0087
- Pay with a credit card - go to www.ViolationInfo.com – have your Notice # and Pin # available to log-in
- Pay with debit card or eCheck - go to www.ViolationInfo.com – have your Notice # and Pin # available to log-in
- Pay in person - at the Municipal Courts Building located at 1400 Lubbock Street, Houston, TX 77002
- Pay by phone – Call Customer Service toll free at 1-866-225-8945, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. central time. You will need to have a valid credit card; a \$1.75 convenience fee will be assessed for all phone payments

9. What if I never received the first notice you mailed?

In accordance with Texas Law, within 30 days after the date of the violation, the City mailed the original "NOTICE OF VIOLATION" to the vehicle owner at the address shown on the registration records of the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles; or if the vehicle was registered in another state or country, the owner's address as shown on the motor vehicle registration records of the department or agency of the other state or country analogous to the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles.

Texas Law presumes that you received the “NOTICE OF VIOLATION” on the fifth day after it was mailed, even though you may not have in fact received it.

Further information can be found in Texas Transportation Code, Chapter 707, or you may wish to consult with your attorney.

10. My violations occurred several years ago. Can you still legally make me pay it? What about the Statute of Limitations?

You are still legally obligated to pay the penalties to the City. Texas law does generally require that debts be collected within 4 years. However, Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code Section 16.061 makes special provision for cities, counties and other political subdivisions of the state. There is no statute of limitations that would bar the City from collecting this debt from you. Regardless of how old the debt may be, the City can file suit and get a judgment against you, and take other collection action against you.

11. Can I get a payment plan or extension of time to pay?

No. Payment plans and extensions are not available. Partial payments will be accepted and credited to your debt; however, Credit Bureau Reporting, lawsuits and other collection actions against you will proceed on schedule as to the remaining unpaid balance.

12. What happens if my check is not paid by my bank?

If your check bounces or for any reason is not honored by your bank, you will be charged a \$25 fee in accordance with City Ordinance. This fee is in addition to the penalties you owe for Red Light violations. Collection action will proceed on the increased balance due. Depending on the circumstances, criminal prosecution may also result.